



STILL
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UNIVERSE

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1996

WAR MACHINE



W. MORE
P. PALMISTO
'95

FINAL
WAR'S
END!
ISSUE!

THE KISS OFF!

SHIELD INFIRMARY,
BAKERSFIELD, CA.

FIFTEEN MINUTES
AGO, ONE OF MY
BEST FRIENDS DIED.

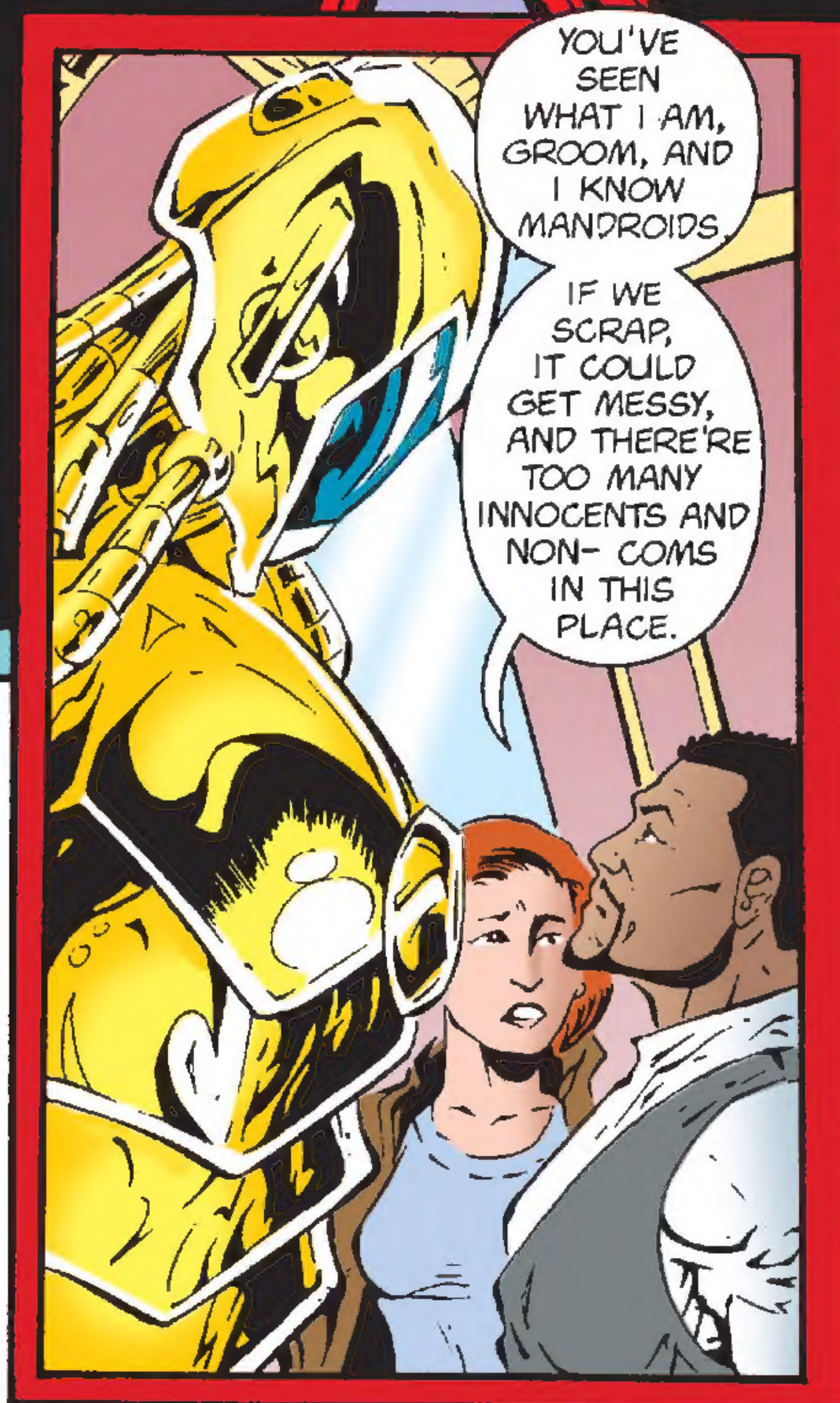
BUT CAREER-GEEKS LIKE SHIELD
AGENT GROOM NEVER LET
ANYTHING PETTY LIKE RESPECT
FOR THE DEAD COME BETWEEN
THEM AND A SERVICE
COMMENDATION.

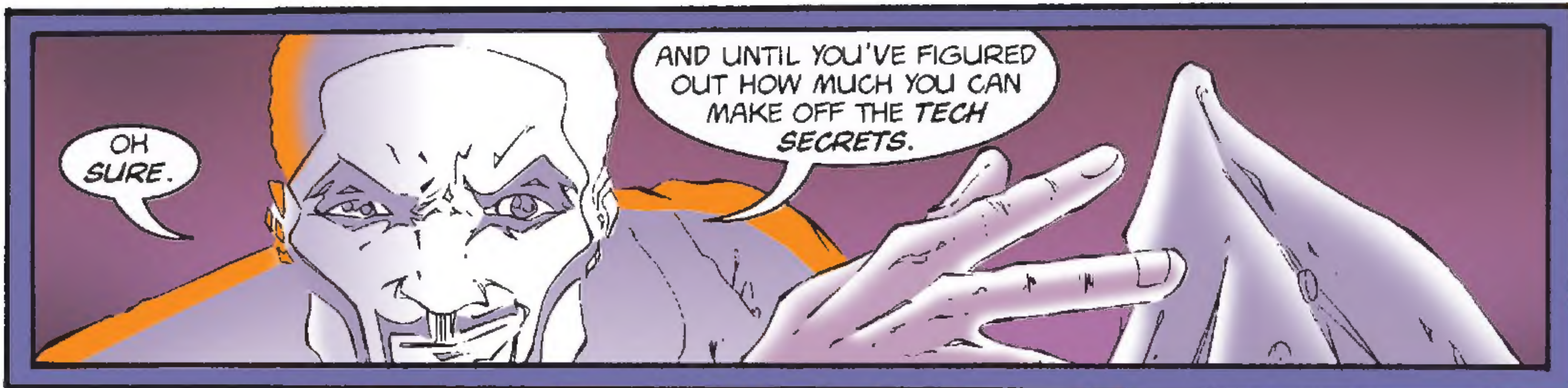
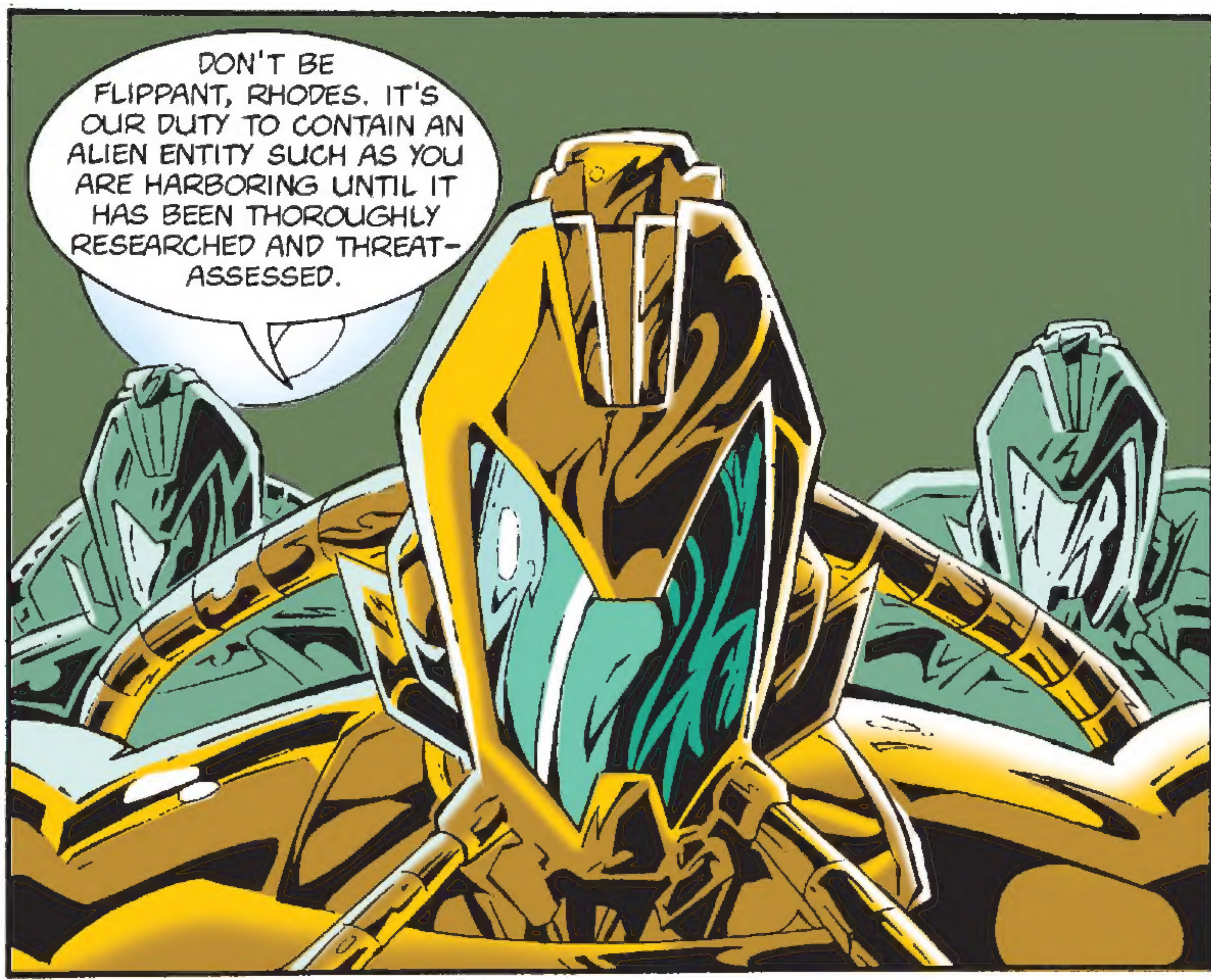
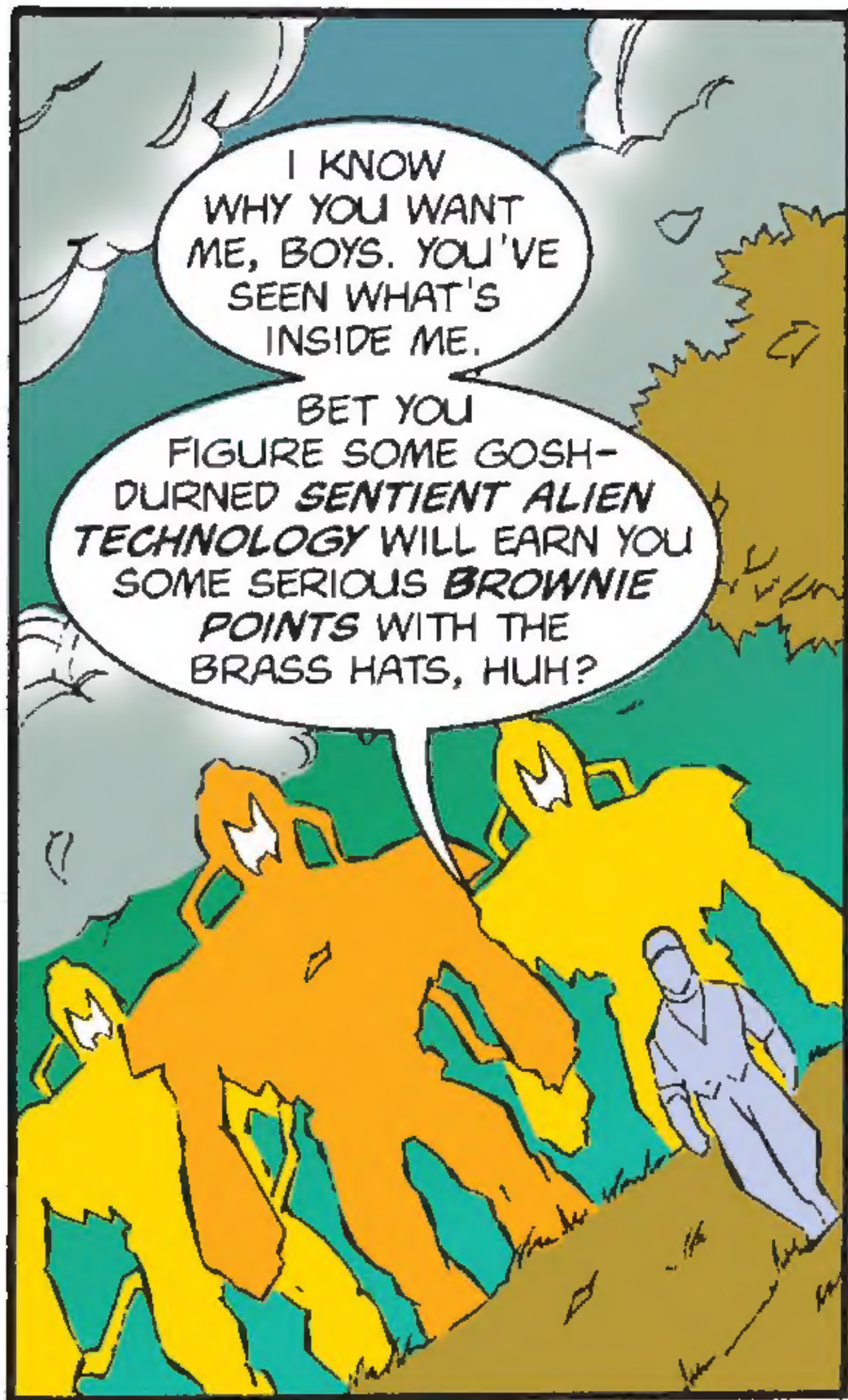
PARTICULARLY WHEN
HE'S WEARING A
MANDROID EXO-SUIT
FRESH OUT OF THE
SUPPLY CUPBOARD.

LET'S
GO, MR
RHODES.

A FAREWELL PERFORMANCE FROM
DAN ABNETT - STORY
FRED HAYNES - PENCILS
JOHNNY GREENE - INKS
ERICKA MORAN - COLOR
JOHN COSTANZA - LETTERING
MALIBU - COMPUTER COLOR
NEL YOMTOV - TOP BLOKE
BOB HARRAS - LORDY-LORD
KING O' EVERYTHING
THE PART OF MIKE MARTS WAS
PLAYED BY BRAD PITT

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GET HIM OFF ME!
GET HIM OFF ME!

AWW,
SHUDDUP,
GROOM!

AS FOR YOU,
CHARLIE...TAKE A
NUMBER.

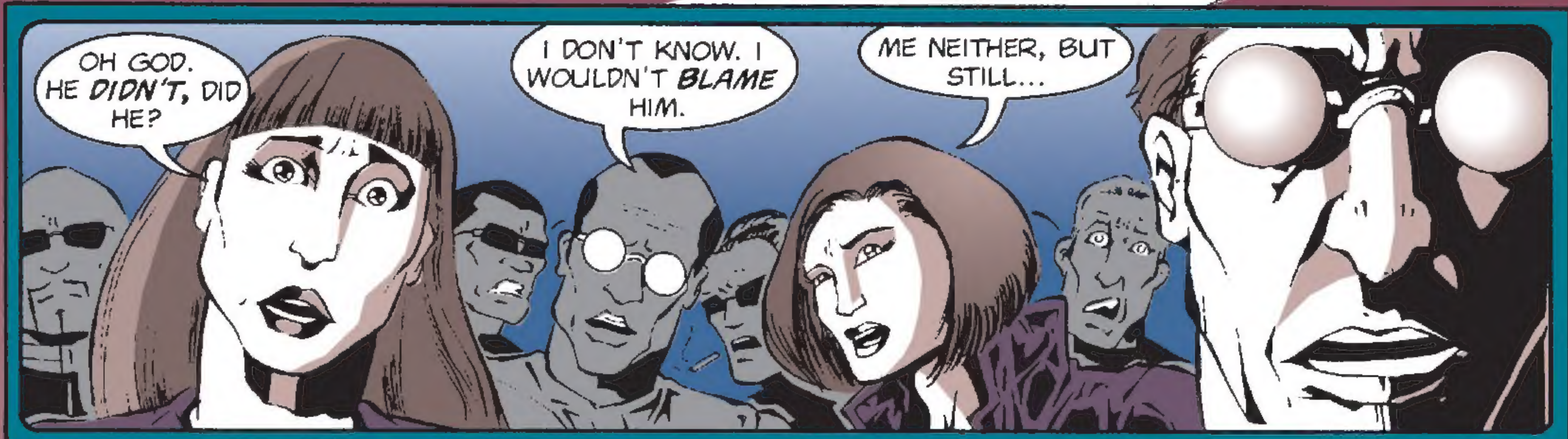
GNHKK!



NOW
AS I WAS
SAYING,
GROOM...

...KISS
OFF!

CRASH!



OH GOD.
HE *DIDN'T*, DID
HE?

I DON'T KNOW. I
WOULDN'T *BLAME*
HIM.

ME NEITHER, BUT
STILL...

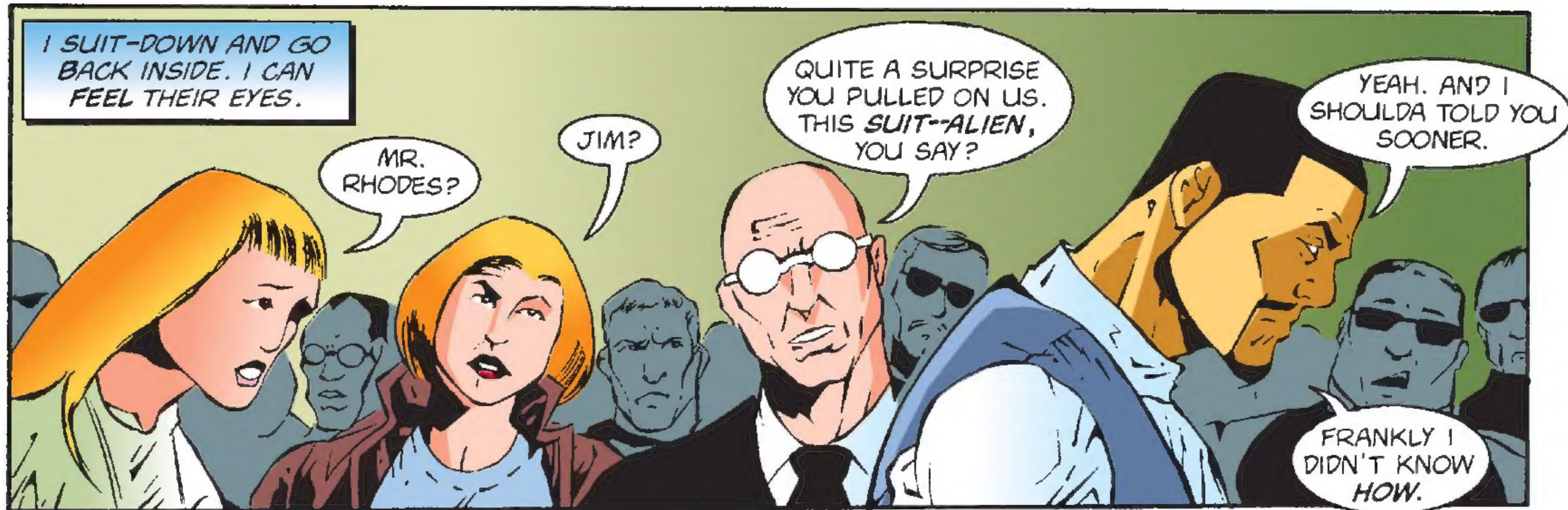
OH,
GET UP,
GROOM.
I MISSED
YOU BY MILES.
WELL, *MICRONS*
ANYWAY.

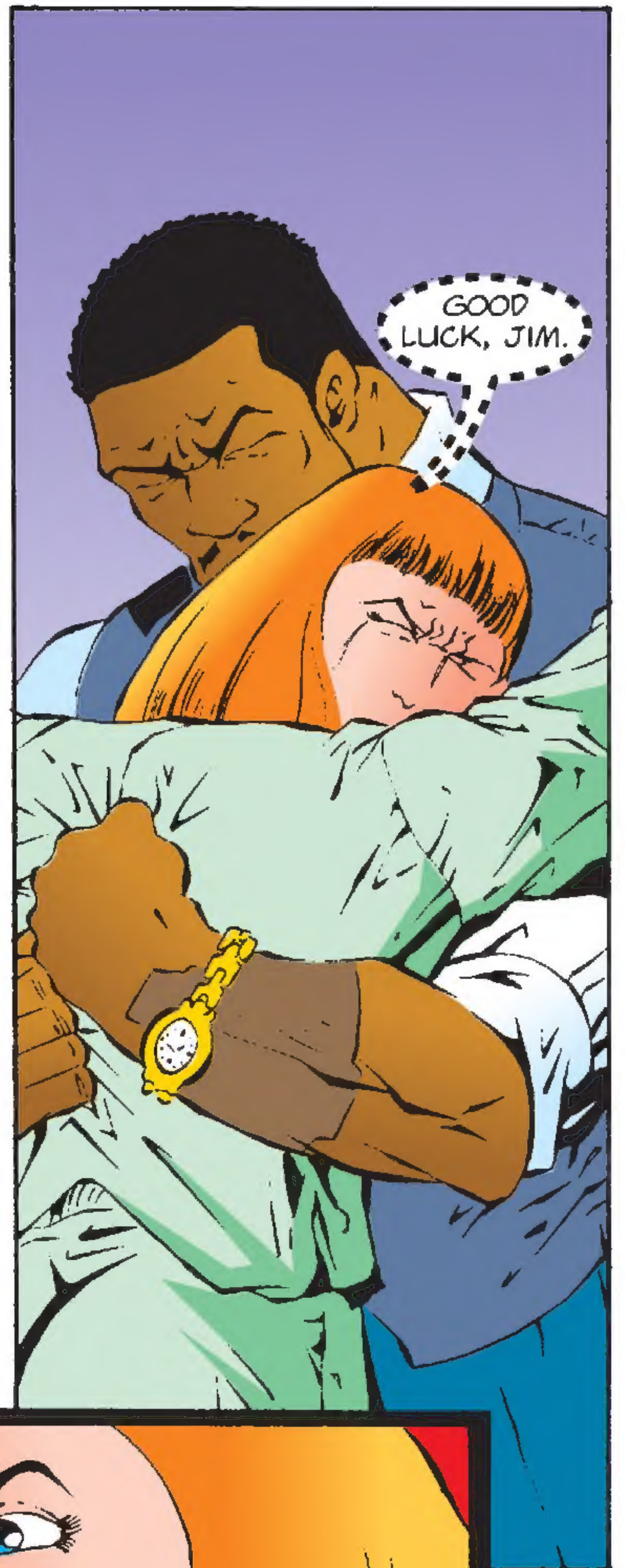


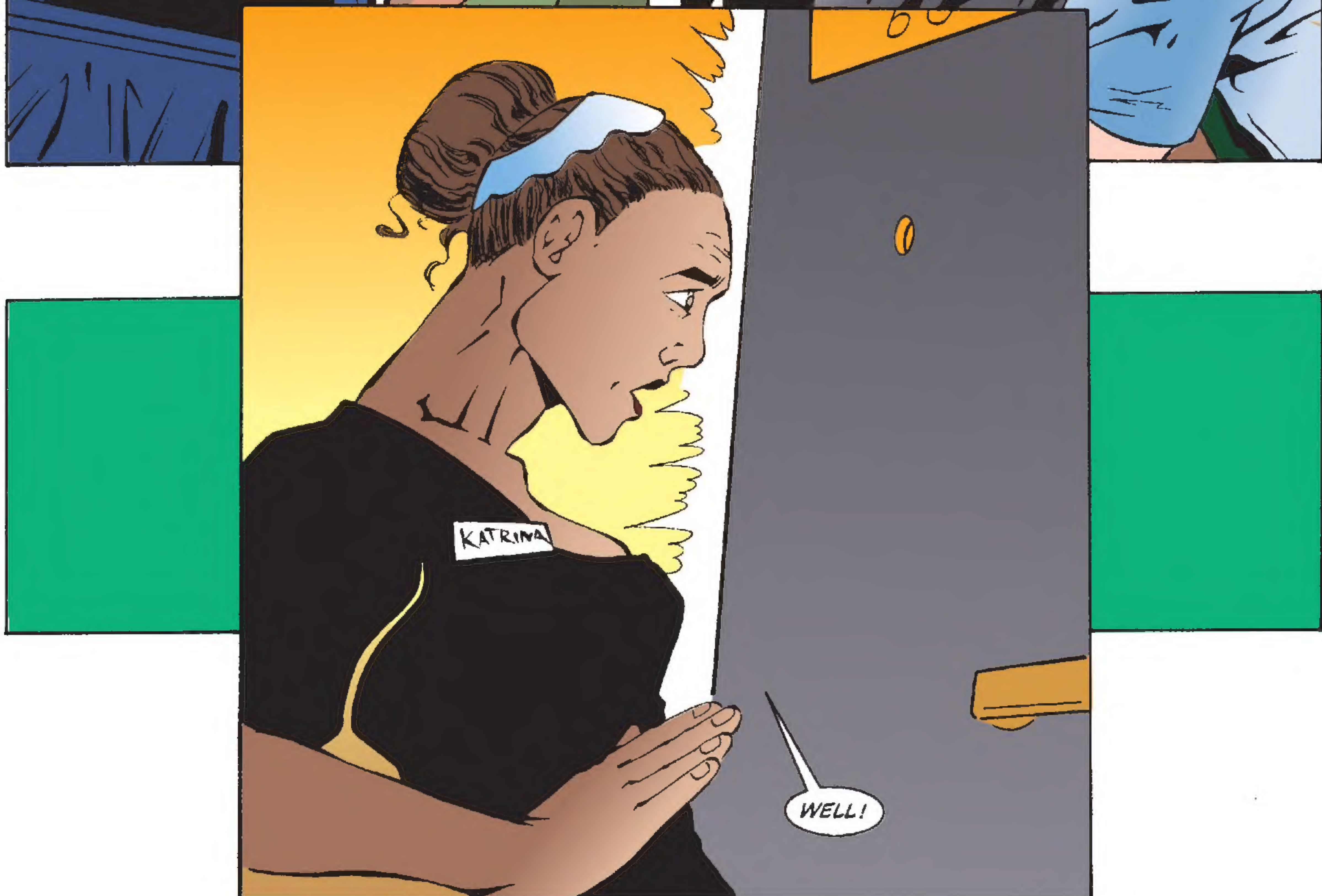
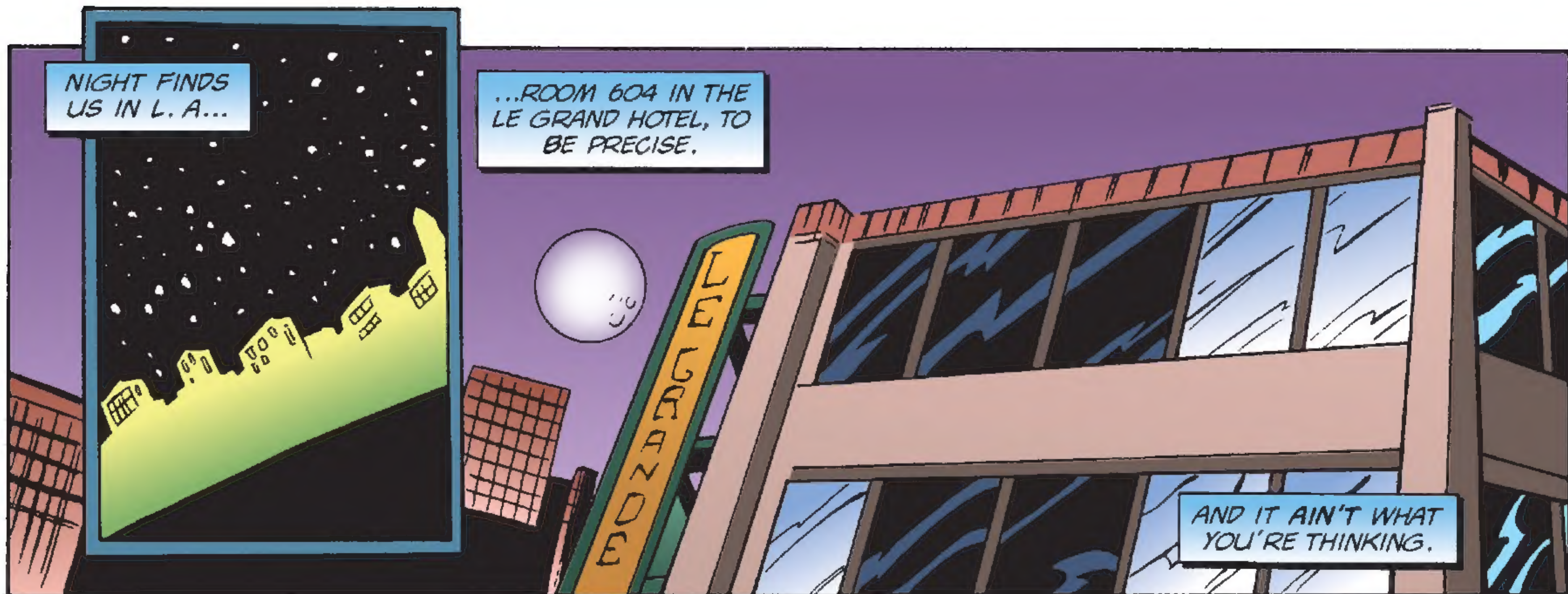
Y-YOU
DIDN'T KILL
ME...



YOU'RE
NOT WORTH
IT.







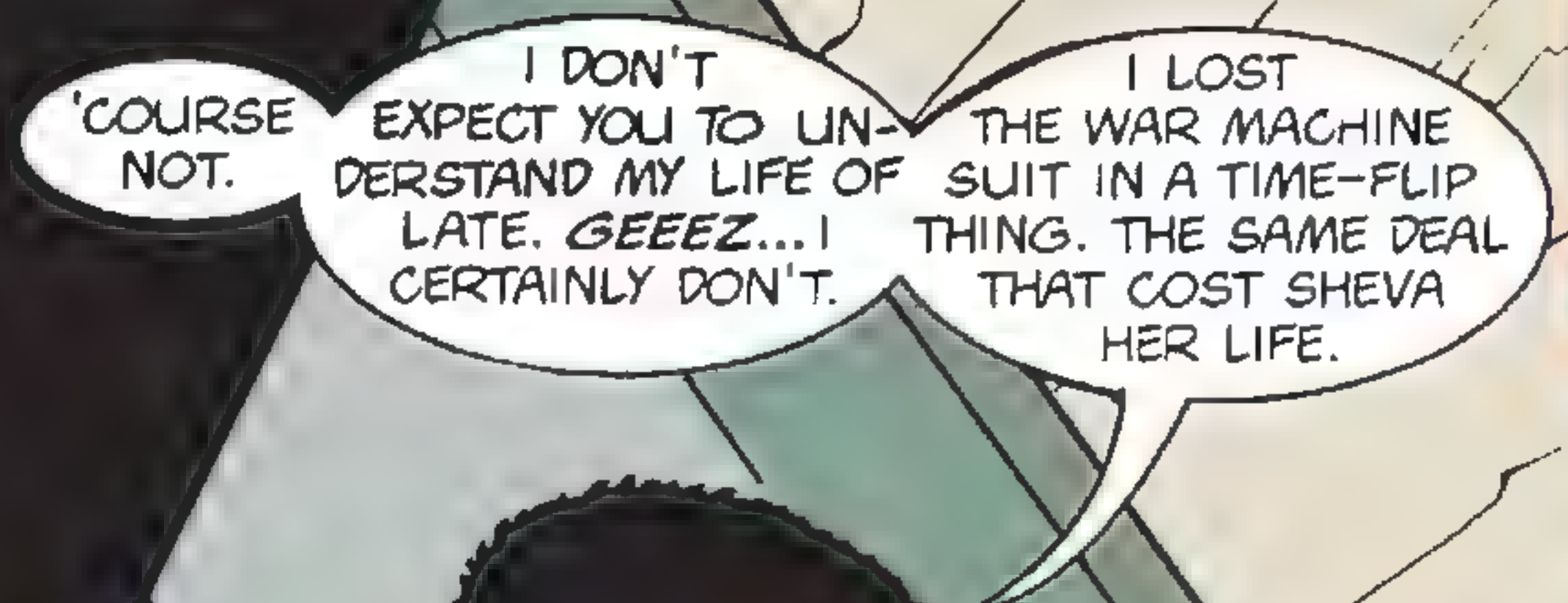


-MMGH-
GOOD
B. L. T.

-MNCH-
YEAH.



DON'T
THINK THIS
MEANS I'VE FOR-
GIVEN YOU OR
ANYTHING.



'COURSE
NOT.

I DON'T
EXPECT YOU TO UN-
DERSTAND MY LIFE OF
LATE. GEEZ... I
CERTAINLY DON'T.

I LOST
THE WAR MACHINE
SUIT IN A TIME-FLIP
THING. THE SAME DEAL
THAT COST SHEVA
HER LIFE.



RAE,
MY LIFE HAS
BEEN A **ROLLER-
COSTER** RIDE
LATELY.

EVEN
BY MY OWN
DEMANDING
STANDARDS.

THEN I WENT
FOR A LONG WEEKEND
AND GOT **RECRUITED** BY
SOME ALIEN WEAPON THAT
BONDED INTO MY FLESH.
ENDED UP FIGHTING IN A WAR
AGAINST TONY AND SOME
CREEP CALLED KANG. DON'T
KNOW WHO LED ME TO THE
NEW SUIT. DON'T EVEN
KNOW WHY OR
WHAT FOR.



WHO KNOWS?
MAYBE IT WAS *SCARE
TACTICS* BECAUSE THEY
DIDN'T APPROVE
OF YOU...

...AND BELIEVE
ME, IF I'D THOUGHT
THEY'D DO *THAT*, I'D
NEVER HAVE MADE
YOU COME TO
PHILLY.

OR MAYBE
THE RACE ISSUE WAS
SMOKESCREEN. MAYBE
THEY'D HAVE GONE OFF
WITH *ANY* GIRLFRIEND...
IF THEY KNEW I *DID*
HAVE A KID SOME-
WHERE.

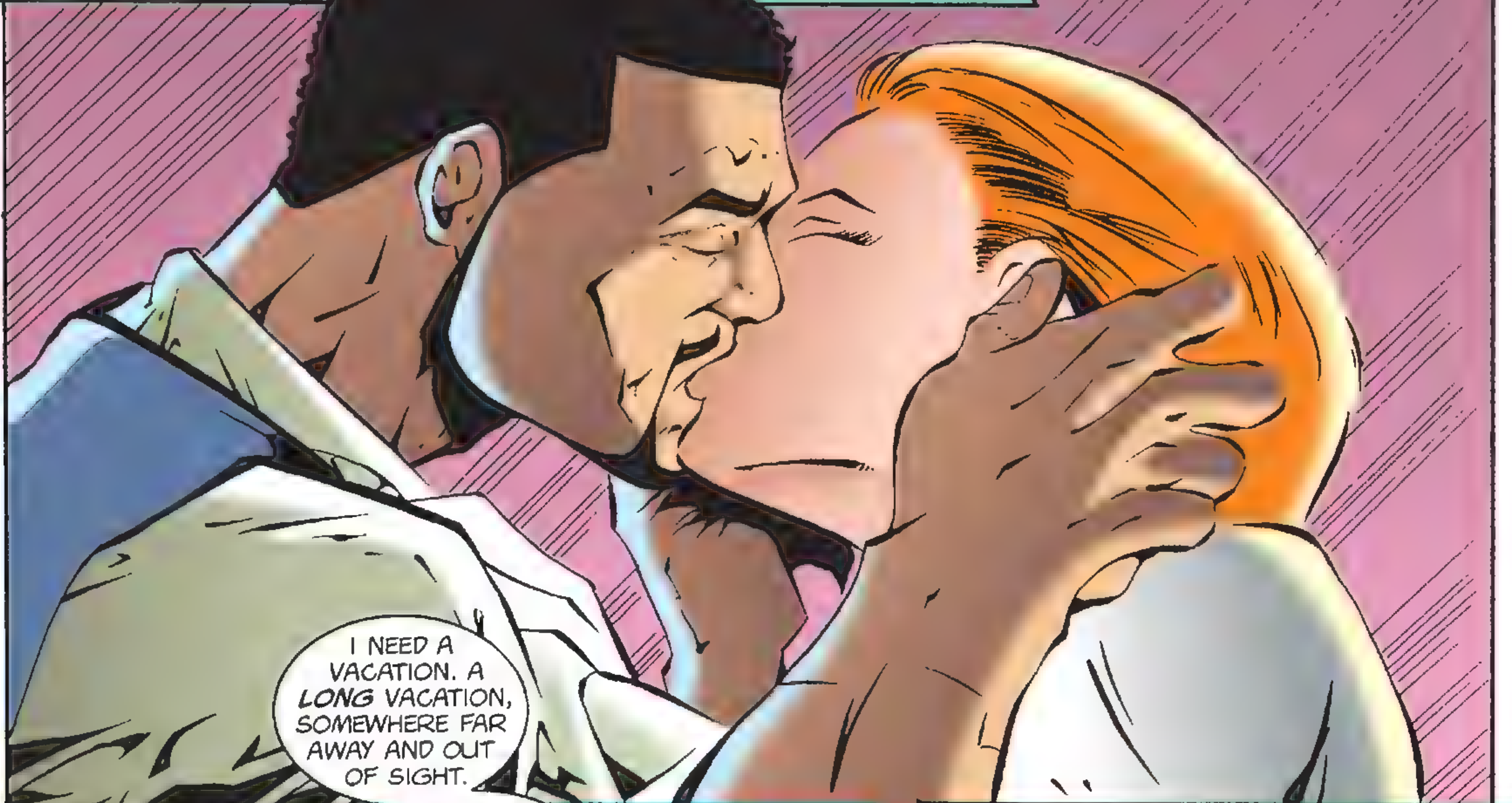
I *MEAN*...
I HAD SEVERAL
RELATIONSHIPS WAY
BACK WHEN I LIVED IN
PHILLY. IT'S UNLIKELY,
BUT IT'S NOT
IMPOSSIBLE.

SO WHAT'S
YOUR NEXT
MOVE?

...AND IF I *DO* HAVE A
CHILD SOMEWHERE, I CAN'T
THINK ABOUT FINDING HIM
UNTIL I'VE FOUND
MYSELF.

THESE MARKS,
THESE MANDALAS, ON MY
SKIN...THE LIVING, BEATING
THING INSIDE ME...I'VE *GOT*
TO KNOW MORE ABOUT
THAT BEFORE I
MOVE ON.

WELL,
I'M NOT READY
TO FACE MY
FOLKS JUST
YET...



WHAT I HAVE IN
MIND STARTS
THE NEXT
MORNING.

I HEAD BACK TO MY
APARTMENT, AND SET
MYSELF THE TASK OF
FITTING MY LIFE INTO A
PIECE OF CARRY-ON
LUGGAGE.



I GOTTA TRAVEL LIGHT,
SO THE PACKING IS
RUTHLESSLY
SELECTIVE.

WHAT DO I TAKE IF
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT I'LL MISS?

WHAT DO I LEAVE
BEHIND WHEN I'M NOT
SURE WHEN I'M
COMING BACK?

MAN.

WHAT IT COMES DOWN
TO IS MEMORIES.
CLOTHES AND STUFF
DON'T MATTER.

BUT EACH
PHOTOGRAPH I
FIND...

ME AND TONY. BACK IN THE
BOARDROOM DAYS, BEFORE OUR
GREAT PARTNERSHIP FOUNDERED AND
SANK WITH ALL HANDS.



I'D GIVE EVERYTHING I
HAVE TO GET THOSE
TIMES BACK AGAIN.
EVERYTHING, JUST TO
BRING TONY BACK.

THINGS WERE DIFFERENT BACK
THEN. SIMPLER. I HAD A METAL
SUIT I COULD PUT ON AND
TAKE OFF. I HAD BROTHERS IN
ARMS THAT I COULD TRUST
WITH MY LIFE.



I'M NOT EVEN SURE
WHAT I AM
ANYMORE...



...EXCEPT
HUNGRY AND
ITCHING TO GET
OUT OF HERE.

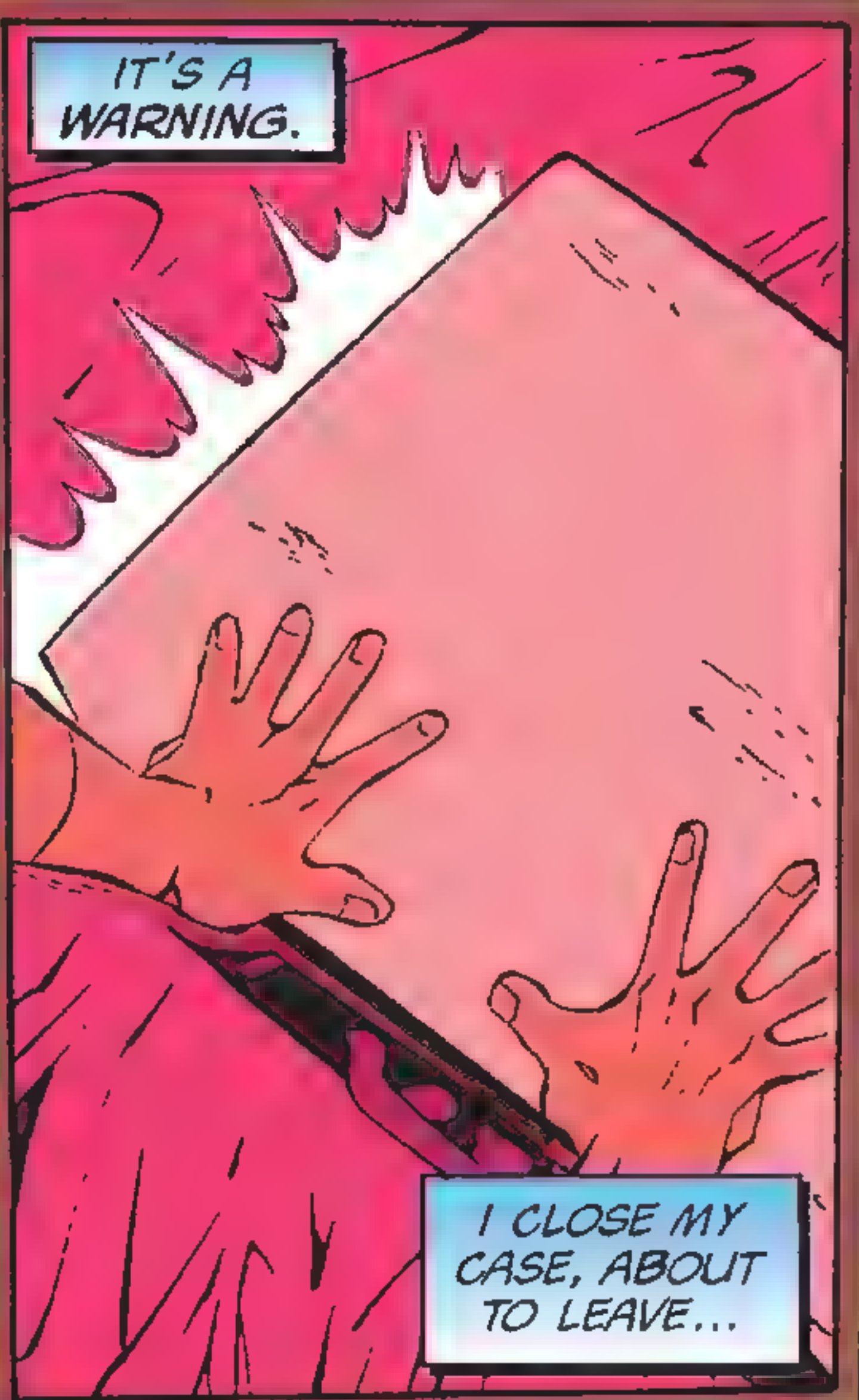


THEN THE SKIN-
BRAND OF MY RIBS
HUMS AND PULSES.



DEEP INSIDE ME,
THE WARWEAR
HAS WOKE UP.

IT'S A
WARNING.



I CLOSE MY
CASE, ABOUT
TO LEAVE...

TOO
SLOW.

WHOOHWHSHH!



S. H. I. E. L. D.'S
FOUND ME.

JAMES
RHODES?

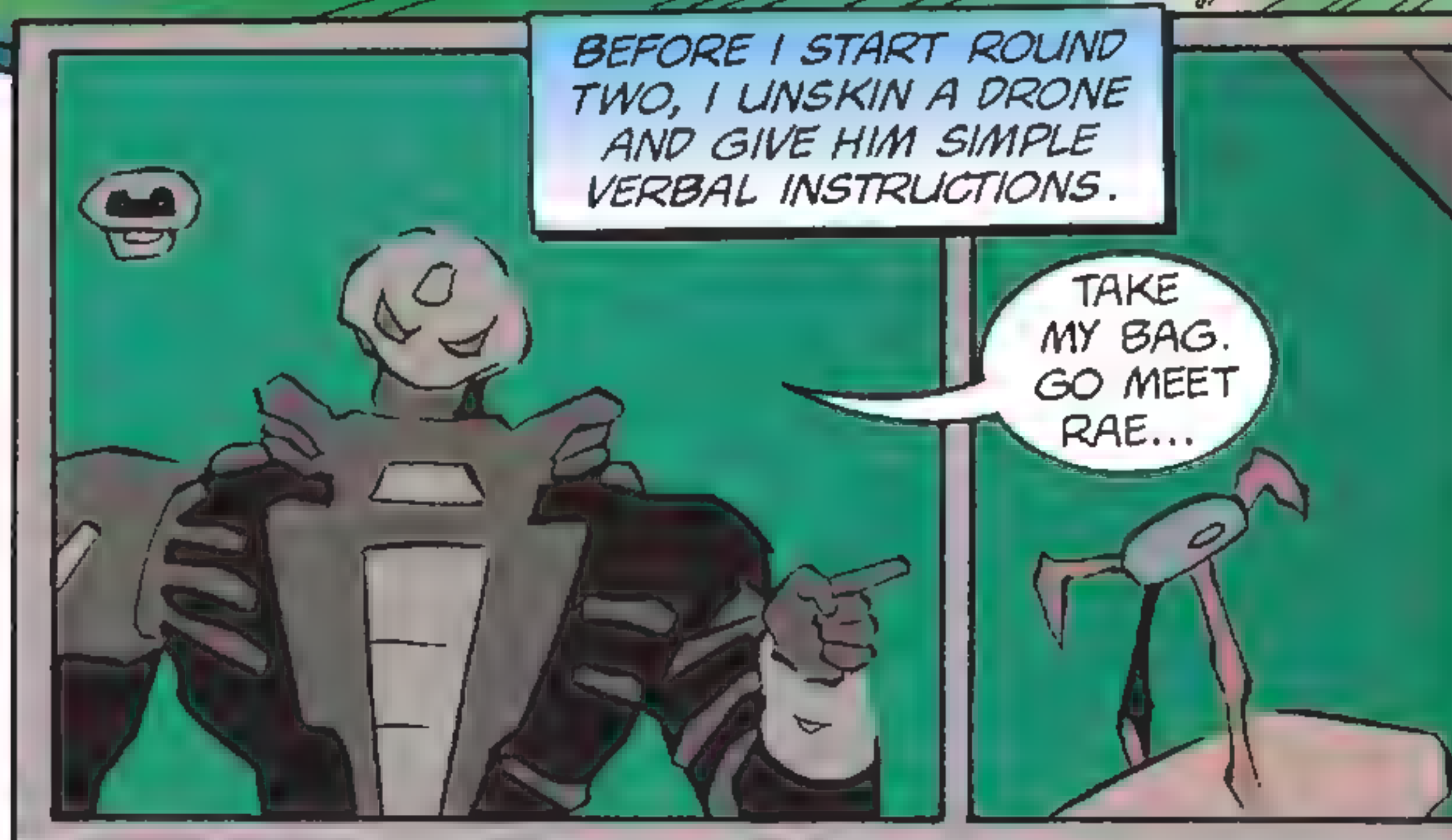
I AM A
MANDROID
DEPLOYED
TO APPREHEND
YOU.

DON'T DO
ANYTHING
STUPID.





HE EXITS THE WAY HE
CAME IN, WITH A
TRASHED SUIT AND A
MILD CONCUSSION.



TAKE
MY BAG.
GO MEET
RAE...



"...I'LL JOIN YOU
BOTH SHORTLY."

FABBOOOMMMFF!

JUST AS I EXPECTED
A WHOLE...A WHOLE...

DARN! WHAT IS THE
COLLECTIVE TERM FOR
DIPSTICK SHAVEHEADS IN
GOVERNMENT-ISSUE TIN
PANTS?

RHODES! THIS
IS AGENT GROOM!
YOU'RE HARBORING
UNCLASSIFIED EXOTIC
TECHNOLOGIES!

AND YOU'RE
SURROUNDED, MR.
RHODES. SURRENDER
NOW AND SUBMIT
TO AN EXAMINA-
TION.

OR
WHAT?

OR WE
TAKE YOU
DOWN.

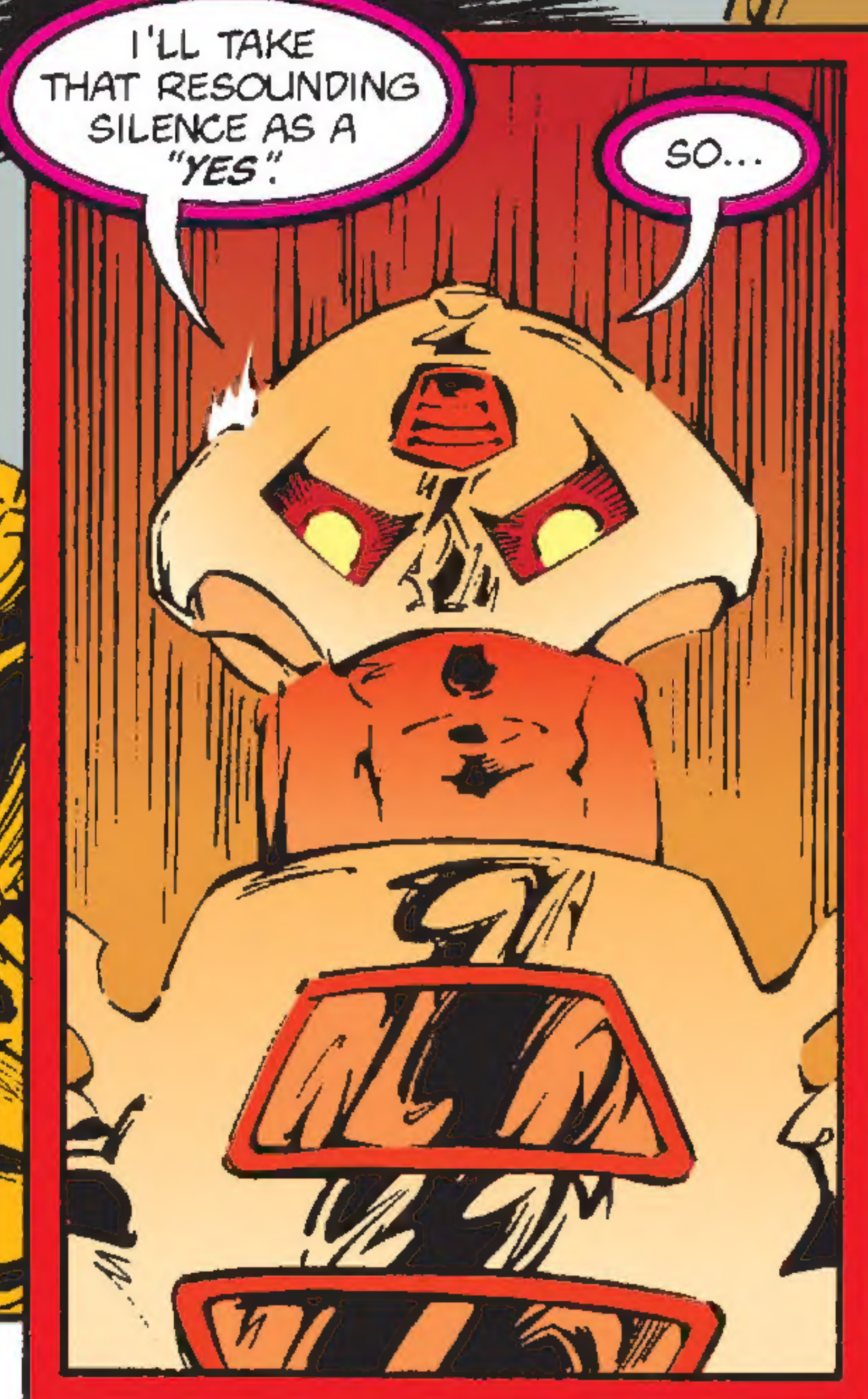
YESTERDAY,
YOU CAUGHT
US ON THE
HOP.

NOT
TODAY.



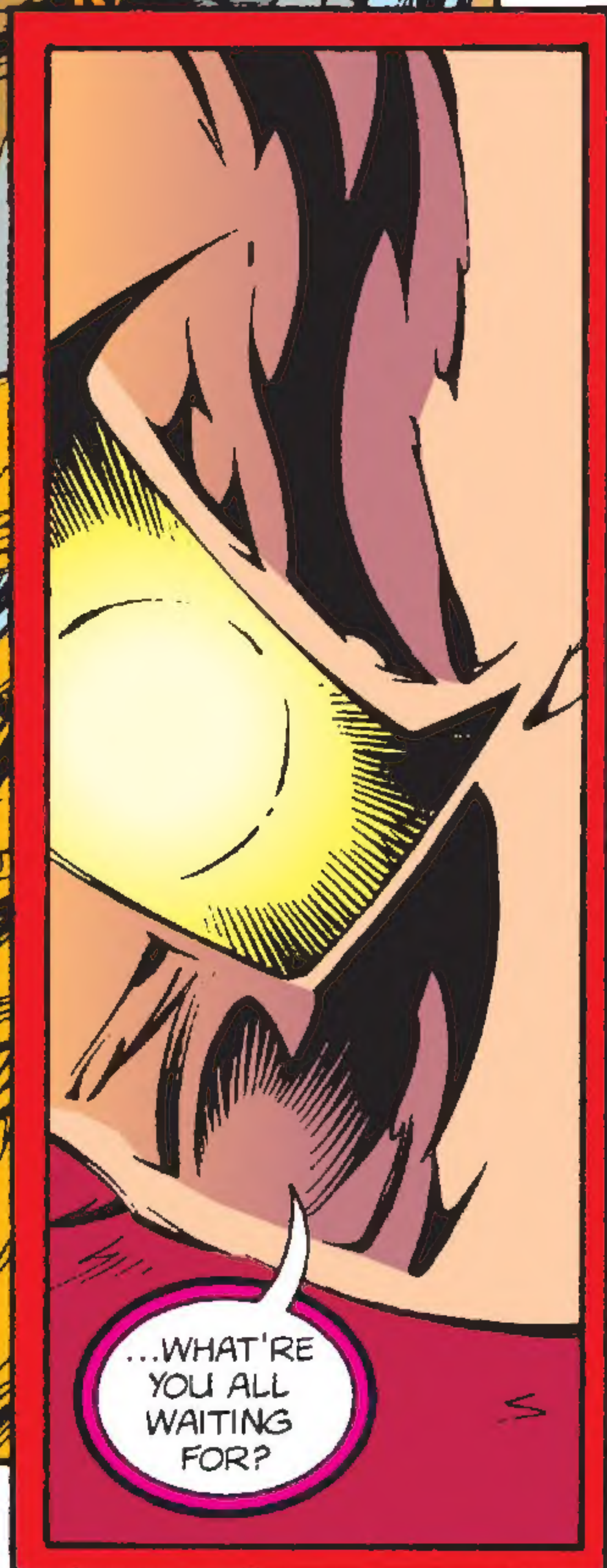
YESTERDAY,
I BARELY BROKE
A SWEAT. AND I
PULLED MY
PUNCHES.

ARE YOU
SURE YOU WANT
THIS MUCH HURT,
GROOM?

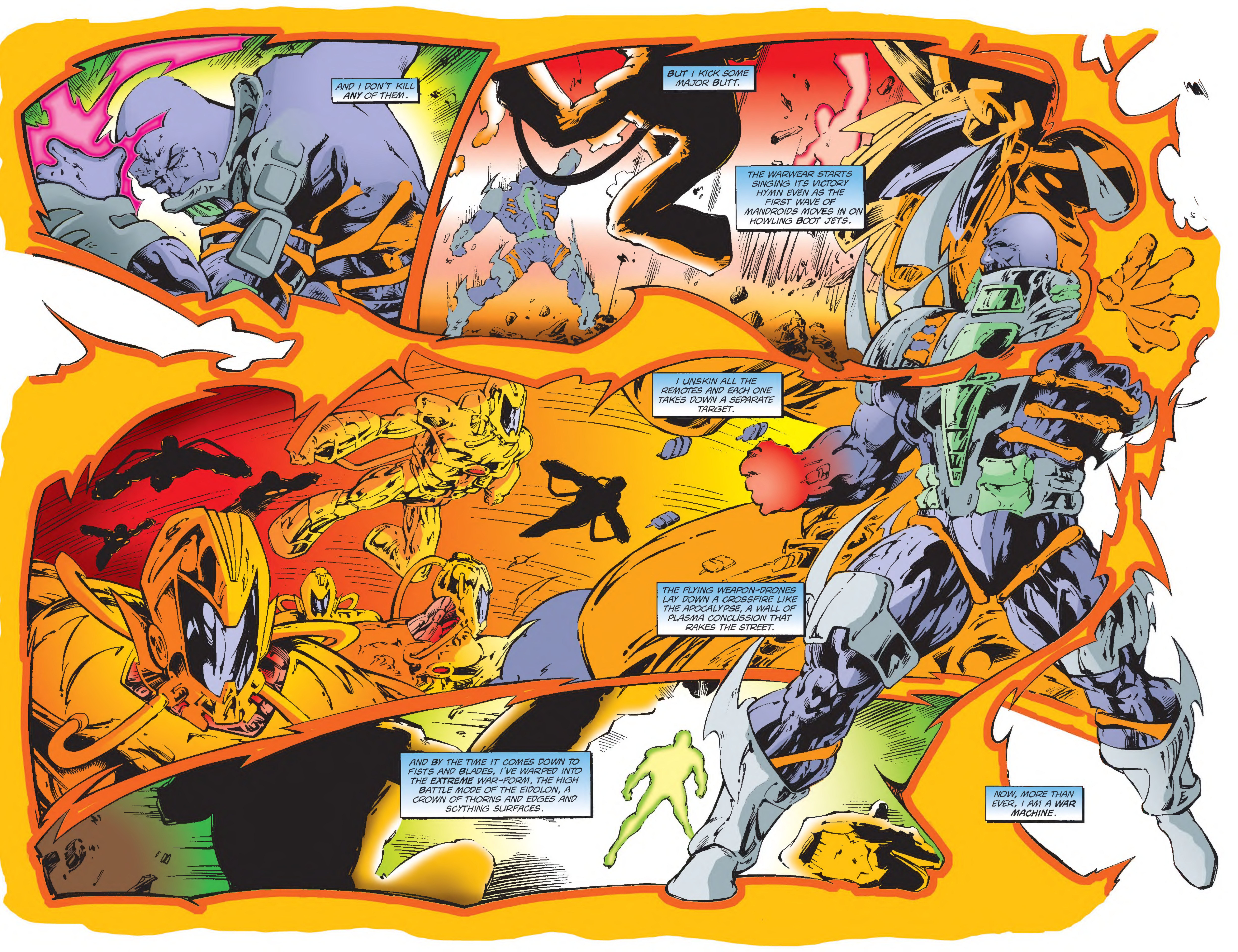


I'LL TAKE
THAT RESOUNDING
SILENCE AS A
"YES".

SO...



...WHAT'RE
YOU ALL
WAITING
FOR?



AND I DON'T KILL
ANY OF THEM.

BUT I KICK SOME
MAJOR BUTT.

THE WARWEAR STARTS
SINGING ITS VICTORY
HYMN EVEN AS THE
FIRST WAVE OF
MANDROIDS MOVES IN ON
HOWLING BOOT JETS.

I UNSKIN ALL THE
REMOTES AND EACH ONE
TAKES DOWN A SEPARATE
TARGET.

THE FLYING WEAPON-DRONES
LAY DOWN A CROSSFIRE LIKE
THE APOCALYPSE, A WALL OF
PLASMA CONCUSSION THAT
RAKES THE STREET.

AND BY THE TIME IT COMES DOWN TO
FISTS AND BLADES, I'VE WARPED INTO
THE EXTREME WAR-FORM, THE HIGH
BATTLE MODE OF THE EIDOLON, A
CROWN OF THORNS AND EDGES AND
SCYTHING SURFACES.

NOW, MORE THAN
EVER, I AM A WAR
MACHINE.

THE FIRE IN ME IS SO HOT, I ALMOST FEEL CHEATED WHEN IT'S DONE AND THE BATTLE IS OVER.

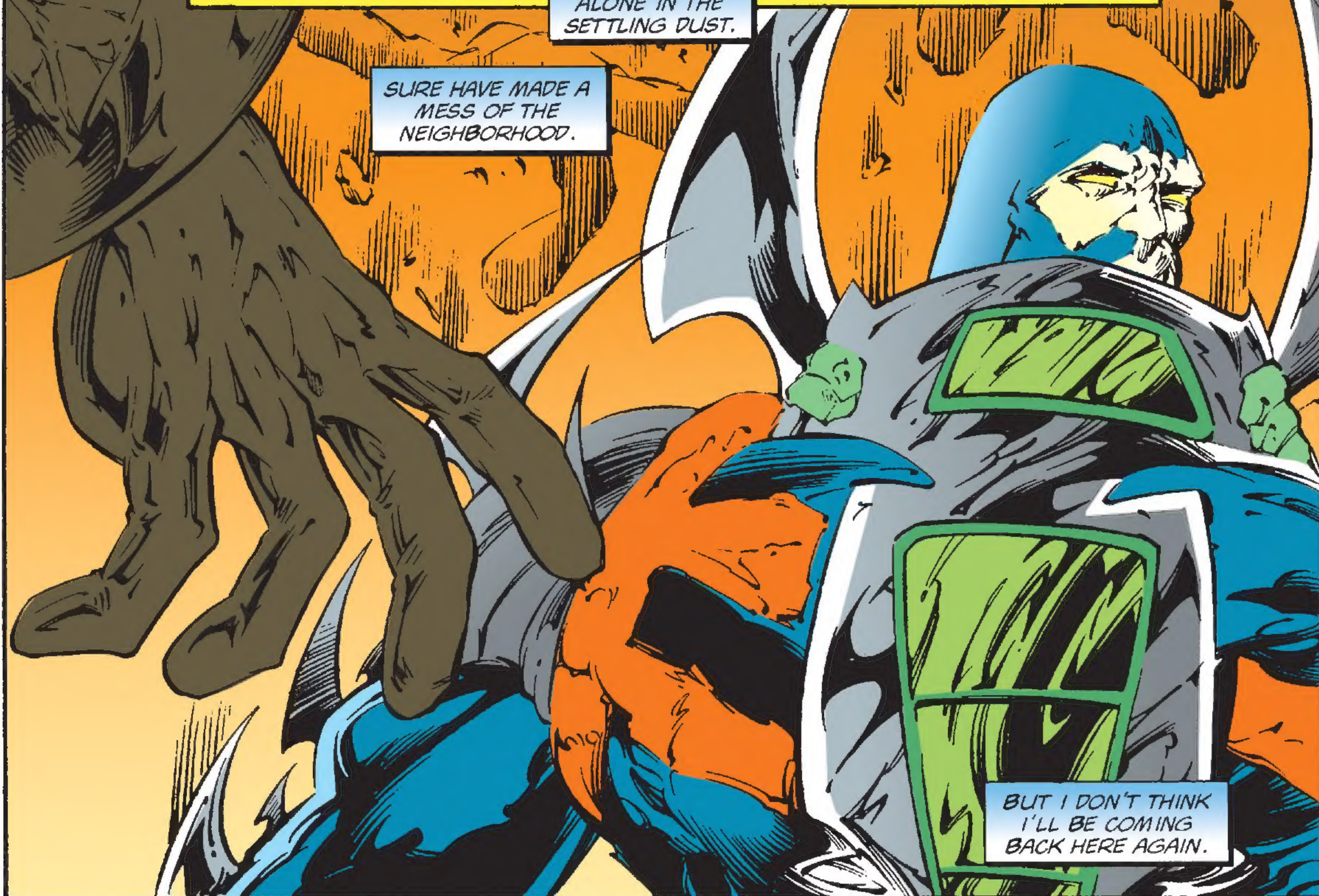


GROOM'S CALLING HIS UNITS BACK, AND THOSE THAT CAN STILL GET MOTIVE POWER OUT OF THEIR TRASHED SUITS FALL BACK.



AND I'M LEFT ALONE IN THE SETTLING DUST.

SURE HAVE MADE A MESS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL BE COMING BACK HERE AGAIN.

RAE'S WAITING
TWO BLOCKS
AWAY.

HEY.

HEY,
YOURSELF.

WHAT KEPT
YOU?

YOUR
LUGGAGE
ARRIVED BY
ALIEN EXPRESS
TEN MINUTES
AGO.

UNFINISHED
BUSINESS.

THAT'S
THE STORY OF
YOUR LIFE, JIM
RHODES.

SO WHERE
TO?

JUST
PUT YOUR FOOT
DOWN AND
DRIVE...

...WE'LL
MAKE IT UP
WHEN WE GET
THERE.

FOR NOW, AT
LEAST...

...THE END

IT'S BEEN
REAL
SO
LONG

RED
HAYNES
DEC.
95

JOHNNY
REESE
9/25